

**"M**AYBE I don't hate this errand!" grumbled Billy Watson, flinging himself upon the grass beneath a huge cottonwood tree growing at the river's edge. "I don't believe Mother would have asked me, if she knew how I hated it—especially to go to the Gregg's! 'Course I couldn't tell her! She'd think I was nothing but a big baby!"

Billy pressed down in the tall grass, and stared at the swift flowing river with troubled eyes.

"If I only wasn't!" he went on miserably. "I'd give anything if I wasn't!"

A cool black nose poking at his bare feet made Billy jump and look around. Chappy, Colonel Pepperpod's Airedale terrier, whined and caressed the hand Billy put out to pet him.

"Hello, old fellow!" greeted Billy. "I suppose this means that someone from Twilliger Hill is near."

And as he spoke, Colonel Pepperpod's round little body and merry face pushed through the shrubby back of him.

"Heigh-ho, Billy," saluted he. "Lazying away this lovely afternoon?"

"No, sir," Billy replied. "I just stopped here for a minute on my way—" Billy reddened; then finished very frankly: "Mother sent me to Mrs. Gregg's with a jar of raspberry jam she just made. I got this far with it—and don't want to go on!"

"But you know the Gregg family," said the colonel. "The five girls attend the same school that you do."

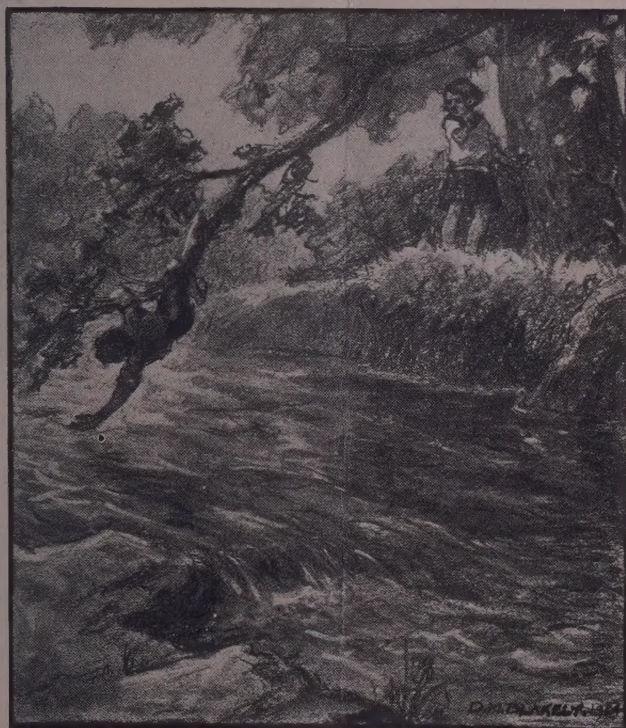
"Yes," returned Billy, "I know them; but that doesn't make it any easier to go into a house where there are about a million silly, giggling girls!"

"Oh, I see." The little colonel smiled and regarded Billy with sympathetic eyes. Presently he asked briskly:

"Billy, can it be that you are bashful?" For a moment Billy did not answer; never before had he mentioned it to anyone; he even disliked mentioning it to himself.

## Old Shy-Face

By Grace Downey Tinkham



"BILLY CLUTCHED THE LIMB WITH HIS BARE TOES, AND STRETCHED OUT AS FAR AS HE COULD OVER THE HURRYING LITTLE RIVER"

*Drawing by D. M. Blakely*

"If she wouldn't laugh at me and say, 'Old Shy-face!' 'Old Shy-face!' every time she sees me, guess I wouldn't be so bashful maybe!" he fiercely blurted out.

"And who does this?" quietly inquired the colonel.

"Why, Peggy Gregg, sir!"

"If you convinced her that you were neither annoyed by her teasing—or really bashful, don't you think she soon would stop it?" said Colonel Pepperpod.

"I don't know, sir. . . I've tried mighty hard not to be b-bashful! I'd give anything not to be!"

"When I was your age," began the little colonel, after an interval of silence, "I was about ten times as bad that way as you are, Billy. I would almost run every time I saw a girl, and would get red clear to the tops of my ears if I had to

speak to one. Then I realized that could not go on. It made me too utterly wretched. So, I started thinking up schemes to cure myself. Plan after plan I thought out and put into practice. And finally I struck upon one that worked—and it worked so well that in a month I had forgotten that I ever had been bashful in my life!"

"Wh-what was the plan, Colonel?" Billy eagerly wanted to know.

"Well, son," came the colonel's level reply, "in the first place I discovered that being bashful is only another name for thinking too much about yourself—and too little about the other fellow! So the cure for it was to turn things around—understand?"

For a while they sat quietly, neither speaking. Then Colonel Pepperpod got up, said that he must be on his way, and gave a low whistle for Chappy as he walked along.

"Think it over, Billy," he called back over his shoulder. "More of the other fellow—and less of yourself, remember!"

"Thank you, sir. I'll try," promised Billy.

But Billy Watson doubted greatly if it would work—with him! A hopeless case like his!

The minutes flew by, and Billy still lay prone beneath the great cottonwood at the river's brink, staring down upon the swirling water with such gloomy eyes that he failed to notice a little girl, skipping along the beach toward him, stop and start to walk a log lying in the water with one end upon the shore. In one hand she carried a small purse, and under the other arm three quite large books.

But suddenly Billy was jolted from his reverie by a shrill scream. Like a flash he bounded to his feet, and dashed to the little girl, who was calling excitedly:

"Oh, that book, that book! I dropped it in the river! Get it—quick! It's sailing down stream! Oh dear, oh dear!"

Billy saw the book speeding onward. Every second it was being carried farther



and farther from shore. He had to think quickly! A stick would never reach it! To plunge into that strong current would be madness! But the big cottonwood with one limb hanging low out over the water—yes, that was it!

In an instant, Billy had darted back, leaped, caught the thick branch, and wriggled far out to its very end. The river swept on beneath him. Then, like a performing monkey, Billy held fast with both feet, and swung head down. The book was travelling toward him on the turbulent surface—but would it come close enough for him to grab it? Billy clutched the limb with his bare toes, and stretched out as far as he could over the wild, hurrying little river. On the book came, and on, its leaves fluttering in the breeze. Billy extended his young body to its utmost and swung out; his hands flashed downward, struggled and fumbled for an instant—then clutched the green cover, and breathing hard Billy swung himself upward.

Safely astride the limb he rested a minute; then worked himself back over the shore, and leaped down.

Peggy Gregg stood close, her eyes wide with admiration.

"Oh, Billy," she exclaimed, "you are wonderful! There isn't another boy in the neighborhood who could have done what you did!"

"Aw, it was nothing!" asserted Billy, handing her the rescued book.

"My, if I had lost this library book," Peggy continued, "I'd have had to pay for it, and it would have taken every penny of my savings! . . . Billy, I'm so grateful to you!"

Again Billy declared that he had done nothing; and that he was glad he was able to save the book. After they had dried it as well as they could with their handkerchiefs, Billy took up the jar of raspberry jam, and they left the river and soon turned into the street where Peggy lived.

At the gate Billy stopped. It was near dinner time and the boy felt that he had better hurry home. Mother would surely be wondering what had become of him. So, placing the jam and the books he had been carrying into Peggy's hands, he started off.

"Oh, Billy," she called before he had gone many steps, "I—I'll never call you what I used to again! I'm sorry now that I ever did! . . . Why, you're not shy, Billy,—you're nerry!"

Billy whistled a loud, gay tune as he hastened home.

"No, I guess she won't call me that again!" he chuckled. "But it's a good thing I remembered about the other fellow, and forgot about myself! Whew! I'd have turned bashful sure—and it would have been, goodbye, library book! . . . Great stuff—that! Remember the other fellow, and forget yourself! Fine for bashfulness! And it works—yes, sir, it certainly works!"

## A Question Box

BY C. C. HANKS

**W**HERE can a man buy a cap for his knee

Or a key to the lock of his hair?

Can his eyes be called an academy  
Because there are pupils there?

In the crown of his head

What gems are found?

Who travels the bridge of his nose?

Can he use, when shingling the roof of  
his mouth

The nails in the ends of his toes?

Can the crook of his elbow be sent to jail?

If so, what did he do?

How does he sharpen his shoulder blades?

I simply don't know, do you?

Can he sit in the shade of the palms of  
his hands?

Or beat on the drum of his ear?

Does the calf of his leg eat the corn on  
his toes?

If so, why not grow corn on his ear?

## The Singing Flowers

BY RUBY HOLMES MARTYN

**Z**IMRI was out of sorts. He didn't want to sift any more of the fine, white sand from the pit behind the cottage where he lived with the Skillful Glassblower. He didn't want to carry the dish of sand he had sifted into the workroom where it would be heated liquid hot and blown into beautiful nosegays of singing flowers. He didn't want to go into the cool, fragrant room where the finished flowers were kept, and hear them sing softly when he hummed a happy tune. The Skillful Glassblower had explained that the happy tune he hummed set tiny waves of air in motion which made the glass flowers sing softly when the wavy air touched them. The precious magic of the singing flowers was like the magic of human hearts that answer loving, gentle words so sweetly that the air is filled with happy sounds.

And the Skillful Glassblower explained sadly that if harsh, angry words were spoken near the singing flowers the clashing, big waves of air so set in motion would shatter the delicate glass into a thousand million fragments.

Just now Zimri was so out of sorts with himself that he wanted to run away from the sand pit and the Skillful Glassblower and the singing flowers. He wanted to run up the path that led to the top of the Enchanted Hill, and see the Jolly Watchman who was said to live in a stone tower at the tip top. He knew that the Skillful Glassblower had recently sent the Jolly Watchman a nosegay of singing flowers that shone and gleamed like living fire in the sunshine, and Zimri thought they gave forth the most delightful sounds of all the flowers to which he had listened.

At last he climbed out of the hot sand pit, and ran into the woods to find the path someone had told him led to the tip top of the Enchanted Hill.

It took a long while to find the path,

but at last Zimri stumbled upon it, and began to climb the Enchanted Hill. The way was steeper than he had imagined it would be; and the calls of the wild folk startled him. He didn't know how dangerous might be the Scolding Squirrels and the Screaming Jays and the Noisy Crows. Zimri was soon more hot and weary than he had been in the sand pit. And frightened, too!

Then a storm cloud rushed up in the sky and it grew so chilly that the lad shivered in his sweat-soaked cotton shirt, and it was so dark that the owls came out to challenge him.

"Who? Who?" they screeched.

Zimri was trembling so that he could hardly tell them his name.

"Zim-ri! Zim-ri!" squeaked the bats that came from a cave to fly about in the dark air.

"Prowler!" boomed a deep voice as a strong hand laid hold on Zimri's cotton shirt and lifted him right into the tower on the tip top of the Enchanted Hill.

Then Zimri shut his eyes and screamed and sobbed with fright, until he heard something crashing into a thousand million pieces. When he opened his eyes he saw that the storm cloud had passed and the air was light again and on the stone floor of the tower lay a thousand million fragments of glass. He had broken the beautiful singing flowers that had been like living fire when the sun shone on them.

And the Jolly Watchman's face was so stern that Zimri jumped out at the nearest open window and ran down the Enchanted Hill as fast as his trembly legs would carry him. He tumbled into a briary thicket that scratched him woefully; and he stumbled over a rolling stone that sent him sprawling on the hard ground; and every step of the way the squirrels were scolding briskly and the jays screamed jeeringly and the crows kept up their raucous noise.

Zimri found the Skillful Glassblower standing on the cottage doorstep with a nosegay of blue flowers in his hand that seemed like bits of the sunshine sky.

"I have been looking for thee, Zimri!" he cried. "Some accident hath broken the singing flowers of the Jolly Watchman into a thousand million fragments, and I would that thou should carry these to replace his loss. Long since thou hast longed for a holiday to climb the Enchanted Hill and this will give thee such opportunity."

Zimri hesitated. But he did not want to tell the Skillful Glassblower that he was afraid to climb the Enchanted Hill! And he didn't like to think of the Jolly Watchman so stern and sorry up there in his tower. So he drew a long breath, and took the nosegay of singing flowers in his hand, and started up the Enchanted Hill for the second time this day.

"I will go bravely and hum a happy tune!" he thought.

And the flowers in his hands sang sweetly then; the path did not seem



nearly so steep as it had before; The Scolding Squirrels and the Screaming Jays and the Noisy Crows watched him quietly. And all at once he saw the Jolly Watchman coming down the path with a glad welcome.

"Thou art nearly at the tip top, lad

Zimri!" he cried. "Thou hast indeed found that the Enchanted Hill is good to climb when thou hast courage and good purpose in thy heart! The magic of it is like the magic of the singing flowers that answer loving, gentle words so gladly that the world is filled with happiness."



MRS. OVENBIRD RETURNS WITH BREAKFAST FOR THE CHILDREN

Photograph by L. W. Brownell

## The OvenBird Family

BY CHARLOTTE ONTHANK

**M**R. OVENBIRD teetered about the ground and pecked among the leaves. The orange stripe on his head bobbed up and down, as he walked and searched for insects. Suddenly he felt lonely and happy all at the same time. Why shouldn't he feel happy, for the day was a beautiful sunny one in May? The ground felt warm to his feet. As he noticed that, he thought of the beautiful nest which he would like to help Mrs. Ovenbird build. That is what made him lonely as well as happy, for Mrs. Ovenbird had not yet joined him after their winter's separation.

Suddenly it occurred to him that he might call her, in case she were near, and that he wanted anyway to tell the trees and the sky and the other birds how happy he was. He flew to the first branch of a large pine, raised his head, and called, "Teacher, Teacher, Teacher, TEACHER, TEACHER!" Then he paused and looked about, listening. There was no response; so he called again, "Teacher, Teacher, Teacher, TEACHER, TEACHER!" The sun shone on his pretty spotted breast, as for a long time he called and listened and called again. At last in a neighboring tree he heard a very faint "Peep! Peep!" and lo! there was Mrs. Ovenbird in her pretty grey-green dress, spotted like his, waiting for him. She

had heard his call and come. He flew over and sang his greeting to her. In his joy he fluttered about her, between his happy songs. Then with one accord they flew to the ground and began walking about, searching for insects. Two orange-trimmed caps bobbed along where there had been only one. Now and then one bird or the other would leap several inches into the air to seize a worm from a twig above.

When they had eaten enough, they flew to a pine grove and walked about on the ground to find a suitable place for a nest. Should they build it under a bush? Mrs. Ovenbird thought not, for the skunks and other enemies were more likely to look in such a place than if it were built without shelter. They decided to wait a little while anyway, as the season was yet early and there was plenty of time. Mrs. Ovenbird sat on a low twig and listened happily while her husband sang his best for her.

After a few days, however, they decided that the weather was warm enough to begin the nest. Mrs. Ovenbird had her choice of places and selected a pine grove where the ground was a mass of pine needles and where there was no bush for protection. Her husband agreed that perhaps she was right that their enemies, the skunks, the snakes and the red squirrels, might look under a bush for a nest but they would never think that any

bird would build right in the open, unprotected wood. At any rate, they decided to build there this time and, therefore, set to work. Mrs. Ovenbird arched the pine needles into a tiny cave within which she made a nest of needles. When it was finished, the arched pine needles made a roof over the nest. The opening was on the side, like an oven—a fact which gave the pair their name of Ovenbird. It was a very clever nest, for it was just the color of the ground and could not be seen, unless one almost stepped on it. If an enemy approached from any side except where the hole was, the nest looked like an uneven place on the ground. Mr. Ovenbird was so delighted with it that he stroked her with his bill and flew to a tree and he sang, "Teacher, Teacher, Teacher, TEACHER, TEACHER!" over and over again in his joy.

In a few days Mrs. Ovenbird began to sit on the nest which held four tiny, brown-spotted eggs. Mr. Ovenbird teetered about, looking for insects, as usual. But often he was so happy that he rose to a tree, fluttered branch by branch to the top, then tossed himself into the air, mounting higher and higher, singing the most joyous song he could think of. It seemed to bubble from his happy heart. Then he folded his wings and dropped like a stone beside Mrs. Ovenbird and stroked her with his bill. Many times a day when he thought of how much joy the world had for them, he sang his flight song, because it expressed his happiness more than his usual "Teacher, Teacher, Teacher, TEACHER, TEACHER!" could do.

At last the day came when four little ovenbirds broke through their shells and opened their mouths wide. Then indeed Mr. Ovenbird had little time to sing, though his heart was happy. He and Mrs. Ovenbird walked hastily about, seeking insects for those four wide-open mouths. They kept a cautious eye alert for hawks, snakes, and other enemies, too. But none molested the nest that was so well hidden because it was not hidden at all.

Before many days the baby birds were able to perch on a low branch and open their mouths just as wide there as they did in the nest. As they sat there, on their first attempt at flying, a great red-shouldered hawk circled above. His eyes, made keener by his hungry appetite, noticed a little motion in the tree. Down he swooped, just as Mrs. Ovenbird was bringing some delicious insects to put in those wide open mouths. With a frightened sharp, "Peep! Peep!" with which to call her husband, she dropped the insects and darted at the hawk, at the same time calling to the babies to flutter to the ground. Again and again she pecked the great bird and soon was joined by her husband. The hawk circled about for a moment, pursued by the angry parents, and then, with repeated harsh cries, rose and disappeared from view.

Without further mishap the babies





## THE BEACON CLUB

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.



Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of The Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

HASTING STREET,  
MENDON, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck:—I read *The Beacon* every Sunday and enjoy it very much. I am eleven years old and have had perfect attendance for two years. Our minister's name is Rev. Roy B. Wintersteen, of Uxbridge. There are six in our class counting myself. Our teacher is Mrs. Snow, of Hopedale.

I would like to join the Beacon Club and to correspond with some boy of my age.

Yours truly,

WALTER JOHNSON.

5 FOX STREET,  
LOWELL, MASS.

My dear Miss Buck:—I go to the Unitarian Church in Lowell. Our minister's name is Rev. A. C. McGiffert. My Sunday school teacher is Mrs. McGiffert. I am thirteen years old. I get *The Beacon* every Sunday and like it very much. I would like to join your club. I remember meeting you at the Unitarian church in Uxbridge. Our minister there was Rev. Mr. Wintersteen.

Very sincerely,

LINA M. STENROSE.

158 WEST MAIN ST.,  
WARE, MASS.

My dear Miss Buck:—I would love to become a member of the Beacon Club. I receive *The Beacon* every Sunday and like the stories very much. I

enjoyed the serial, "The Mysterious Ileka". I belong to the First Unitarian Church. Mr. Gerrish is our minister and we all like him very much. Miss Barbier is my Sunday school teacher and she is very kind to us all. I am twelve years old and in the sixth grade. Would some girl of my age write to me?

Yours truly,

ESTHER IRWIN.

16 HIGH STREET,  
CANTON, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck:—I would like to become a member of the Beacon Club. I am ten years old and I am in the fifth grade at school. I go to the Unitarian Sunday school. My minister's name is Rev. C. H. Valentine. My Sunday-school teacher's name is Miss Martha Elizabeth Draper. I like *The Beacon* and read it every Sunday. I would like to correspond with other members of the club.

Most sincerely yours,

ELIZABETH L. BURT.

Box 34,  
MILLBROOK, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck:—I would like to become a member of the Beacon Club and wear a button. I go to the First Unitarian Church of Duxbury. I love to go every Sunday. Miss Hastings is my teacher. I am nine years old and I would like to correspond with anyone who would correspond with me. I like all the stories of *The Beacon*.

Yours truly,

WESLEY B. STUART.

grew, and before many days there were six ovenbirds teetering about looking for insects, and six orange trimmed caps bobbing along. Mr. Ovenbird sang less now, for he was very busy; and, besides, the days were so warm that they made him feel lazy. The summer passed very happily, and in the fall Mr. Ovenbird took the little male babies with him and Mrs. Ovenbird the little female babies with her. They agreed to meet again in the same place the next May, and parted for the winter.

### Church School News

IN preparation for a Parent-Teacher meeting, held in the Parish House of the First Unitarian Church, Providence, R. I., on Sunday afternoon, March 23, under the leadership of the Director of Religious Education, Mrs. Ryder Holmes Gay, the following questions for self-examination were sent to the parents:

1. Do I appreciate the difficulty under which the church school does its work, viz., voluntary attendance? Have I given the church school credit for what it has accomplished in the face of this difficulty?

2. Have I placed the church school upon at least as high a plane as my children's dancing-school or music lessons, in requiring prompt and regular attendance and conscientious preparation?

3. Am I personally acquainted with my child's teacher? Have I ever met him (her) in my own home? Have I ever conferred with him (her) about my child's work, or thanked him (her) for faithful service? Have I ever criticized him (her) before my children or to myself? Have I ever inquired how I might help him (her)?

4. Am I really willing to delegate all religious training and instruction of my children to the church school, without help, sympathy, or co-operation from myself?

5. Do I realize what it costs the church to give my child religious education each year?

A report from the church school of Erie, Pa., indicates that use is being made of the dramatic episodes in Mrs. Whitman's book, "From Desert to Temple". Mrs. H. S. Byron's class gave "The Kingdom Divided" as part of the opening exercise of the school on Sunday, March 30th. The superintendent, Mrs. Stevens, writes that "all the characters were well interpreted by the boys and girls because they showed feeling and understanding and could, therefore, be unconsciously dramatic." Another class in this school, taught by Mrs. Judson B. Coe, depicted Saul in his cave with great originality and understanding for such young pupils.

The class studying "God's Wonder World" occasionally spends a Sunday afternoon in the museum, led by the teacher, Miss Mary Reisinger, who creates much interest in her work.

A dramatization of "The Kingdom Divided" was also given by a class of boys in the First Unitarian Church School of Cleveland on March 16, Miss Mary Anderson, teacher.

A service in memory of Dr. William C. Gannett was held in the First Unitarian Church School of Buffalo, N. Y., on March 16th. A special responsive service, prepared for the occasion, was used, the minister of the church, Dr. Richard W. Boynton paid a tribute to Dr. Gannett, and Miss Elizabeth Butterfield sang Dr. Gannett's well known manger song, "Sleep, my little Jesus."

## RECREATION CORNER.

### ENIGMA LXI

I am composed of 14 letters.  
My 8, 9, 10, is kitchen ware.  
My 2, 11, are exclamations.  
My 1, 11, 3 14, is sometimes served with ice cream.  
My 4, 12, 11, 2, 7, is an aid in eating.  
My 13, 6, 5, 14, is the opposite of early.  
My whole is a foreign city.

E. L. & H. P. S.

### ENIGMA LXII

I am composed of 14 letters.  
My 10, 2, 4, 13, is not easy.  
My 9, 1, 11, 7, 5, is a girl's name.  
My 8, 14, is a part of the verb to be.  
My 12, 3, 13, 6, is not polite.  
My whole is the name of a writer of good stories.

DANA G. WITHERELL.

### HYDRA-HEADED WORDS

1. I am a gardener's tool; change my head, I am sorrow; change again, I am an enemy.  
2. I am an herb; change my head, I am a veiled suggestion; change again, I am a hue.  
3. I am frantic; change my head, I am unhappy; change once more, I am a pet idea.  
4. I am a girl's name; change my head, I am a clue; change once more, I am a support.

Boylond.

### TRANSPOSITIONS

Fill the blanks in the following lines, using a word of five letters for the first blank and words in the remaining blanks made by transposing the same letters.

He ..... the ..... with a trusty knife,  
And ..... with a sickle the fields of rye.  
The ancient ..... took many a life  
"..... not!" the haughty foemen cry.  
To ..... these words, grammarians, try.

E. A. C.

### CHARADE

I will sing you the song of a proper name:  
The first part's a river, the second the same.  
The third is a pet, very playful and kind,  
And so are the fourth and the fifth, you will find;  
And after these pets you'll find fifty. Now what  
Is the twelve lettered, curious word you have got?  
It's the name of a mountain all smoking and hot.

Youth's Companion.

### WORD SQUARES

I.	II.
1. A place to bake.	1. To cleanse.
2. A valley.	2. A song.
3. A girl's name.	3. Tastes.
4. Not far.	4. A mixture.

ROBERT EDDY.

### ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 29.

ENIGMA LXI.—The Flaming Forest.  
ENIGMA LXII.—Christopher Columbus.  
ENIGMA LXIII.—Charlemagne.  
BEHEADINGS.—1. Stale, tale. 2. Wheat, heat, eat,  
at. 3. Malice, Alice, lice, ice. 4. Lace, ace. 5.  
Chair, hair, air.  
CHARADE.—parent. (pay, pay rent, rent).

## THE BEACON

REV. FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR.

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